



REMARKS

The Preliminary Amendment is submitted in connection with a Continued Processing Application and is responsive to the Office Action dated July 23, 2001. Applicant's have elected to file the CPA, along with this amendment, in lieu of an appeal brief that was to be submitted pursuant to the Notice of Appeal that was filed on January 23, 2002.

Applicants have canceled claim 54 and amended claims 47, 49, 52, 53 and 55. The following remarks are directed to the amendment with reference to specific paragraphs of the Office action of July 23, 2001.

The New Matter Rejection (Paragraph 2)

The objectionable phrase "powder that is adapted to fuse into and form a permanent bond of the decorative enhancement composition as a whole" has been canceled and replaced with "polyethylene powder". Polyethylene powder is specifically disclosed in the descriptive and exemplary sections of this application as well as in the same sections of the parent application, Ser. No. 556,906, now U.S. Patent 5,746,961. It is believed that this amendment obviates the new matter rejection.

The Distinctly Claiming Rejection (Paragraph 4)

The same phrase cited above was also considered by the examiner to have failed the requirements of the second paragraph of 35 USC 112. Accordingly, cancellation of the objectionable phrase by this amendment obviates this rejection also. Additionally, claim 47 as amended recites:

"heating said decorative enhancement composition and said polyethylene surface to

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an elevated temperature and time sufficient to incorporate said decorative enhancement composition into said surface.."

This recitation specifically identifies that the enhancement composition is incorporated into the surface of the polyethylene object.

The obviousness rejection (35 U.S.C. 103) (Paragraph 6)

Contrary to the examiner's statement, WO96/23041 does not disclose a composition containing 5-95% polyethylene. In fact, polyethylene is not even mentioned or illustrated in any example of '041 as a useful powder.

In any event, '041 is not applicable as a prior art reference, as the claims of this application are supported in applicants' prior application, Serial No. 08/566,906, now U.S. patent 5,746,961. The examiner has stated that this application is not entitled to benefit of the filing date (Dec. 4, 1995) of the '906 application because the ranges of contents of the various ingredients of the coating composition disclosed in this application are not identical to the ranges for those ingredients disclosed in the '906 application.

The examiner's test to determine if the claims presented herein are entitled to benefit of the filing date of the '906 application is not proper; the only issue is whether or not the claims presented in this application find support in the '906 application.

The claims do not recite specific numerical ranges for the contents of the coating composition. Therefore, the test to determine if the numerical ranges disclosed in this application are found in the '906 application is

not relevant to the issue of support of those claims in the parent application.

There can be no question but that the parent application discloses an enhancement composition which comprises a liquid carrier, a colorant, the recited class of binders and polyethylene powder. Since all recited components of the composition are disclosed in the parent application, the composition as recited in claim 47 is supported in the parent application.

The examiner also considers that this application discloses application of the composition to a preformed polyethylene object and that this disclosure precludes support in the '906 application because that application discloses coating a mold surface with the coating composition from which the composition is transferred to the surface of the article during the molding step. In both methods, the coating composition combines with and becomes incorporated into the polyethylene surface of a molded polyethylene object.

The generic claim (47) does not recite coating a preformed polyethylene object, as contented by the examiner. The word "preformed" does not appear in claim 47. Instead, the claim recites combining the coating composition and a polyethylene surface. That combining is generic to the method of the '906 application and of this application.

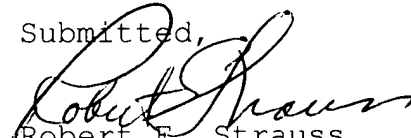
Applicants have chosen to submit a generic claim to the methods of the applications in this continuation application. Subject only to a possible requirement for a terminal disclaimer, applicants are clearly entitled to submit the generic claim in this manner. As the generic

claim (47) is entitled to patentability, the dependent claims are similarly patentable.

The claims are of proper form and recite patentable subject matter over the prior art. Examination and allowance are respectfully requested.

April 22, 2002

Submitted,


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CLAIMS AS AMENDED



CLAIMS AS AMENDED

for completeness, all pending claims are included)

1 47. (**Amended Herein-Thrice Amended**) A method for [permanent]
2 decorative enhancement of a polyethylene surface of a molded
3 polyethylene article, which method comprises the steps of:

4 (a) combining [incorporating] a decorative
5 enhancement composition and [onto] said
6 polyethylene surface wherein said decorative
7 enhancement composition consists essentially
8 of:

9 (1) a liquid carrier that provides
10 the decorative enhancement
11 composition with a consistency and
12 viscosity for liquid methods of
13 application;

14 (2) a colorant to impart a surface
15 color;

16 (3) a binder selected from the group
17 consisting of aromatic and aliphatic
18 hydrocarbon resins, waxes, rosins,
19 and terpene-based resins [to provide
20 adhesion of the decorative
21 enhancement composition to said
22 polyethylene surface;] and

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23 (4) polyethylene powder; and
24 (b) heating said decorative enhancement
25 composition and said polyethylene surface
26 [article] to an elevated temperature and time
27 sufficient to incorporate [fuse] said
28 decorative enhancement composition into said
29 surface and produce a molded polyethylene
30 article having said surface [a permanent]
31 decoratively enhanced [surface characterized]
32 by said [a] colorant. [fused into and
33 permanently bonded in said polyethylene
34 surface of said molded polyethylene article.]

1 48. The method of Claim 47 wherein said molded polyethylene
2 article is a preformed, rotationally molded polyethylene article.

1 49. (Amended) The method of Claim 48 wherein said combining
2 [incorporating] step is accomplished by applying said decorative
3 enhancement composition to said preformed rotationally molded
4 polyethylene article.

1 50. The method of Claim 49 wherein said heating step is
2 accomplished by heating said decorative enhancement composition and
3 said preformed rotationally molded polyethylene article to a

temperature and for a time sufficient to fuse said decorative enhancement composition to said preformed rotationally molded polyethylene article.

51. The method of Claim 47 wherein said liquid carrier comprises 20 to 90 weight percent of said decorative enhancement composition.

52. **(Amended)** The method of Claim 47 wherein [said first mixture of] said colorant, said binder and said particulate thermoplastic powder collectively comprise a first mixture comprising 10 to 80 weight percent of said decorative enhancement composition.

53. **(Amended)** The method of claim 52 wherein said colorant comprises 9 to 50 weight percent of said first mixture and said binder and said polyethylene powder collectively comprise 50 to 91 weight percent of said first mixture.

55. (Amended) The method of Claim 47 [53] wherein said [particulate thermoplastic powder comprises 70 to 30 weight percent of said second mixture and is selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, and ethylene-vinyl acetate co-polymers

5 wherein said] polyethylene powder has a density from 0.88 to 0.97
6 and a particle size no greater than 140 microns.